

Signs and Symptoms of Distress Following a Deployment

**Deployment Cycle Support
Program**

References

- FM 8-51 Combat Stress Control in a Theater of Operations, 1998
- GTA 21-03-004 Battle Fatigue: Normal, Common Signs, What to do for Self and Buddy, 1986
- GTA 21-03-006 Battle Fatigue: Company Leaders Actions and Prevention, 1994
- USACHPPM Technical Guide 241 Battle Fatigue/Combat Stress Reaction
- USACHPPM Technical Guide 240 Combat Stress Behaviors

Outline

- Purpose
- Terminal & Enabling Learning Objectives
- Introduction
- Signs and Symptoms
- When/Where To Get Help

Introduction

- From the Foxhole to the Front Porch.
- Redeployment/Reunion...sounds easy.
- “Normal” may turn into “Distress”.
- Help is available: Chaplain, Unit Leaders, Friends, Medical personnel, etc.
- Look after yourself AND your Buddy.



UNCLASSIFIED

Terminal Learning Objective

Participants will be able to identify post-deployment signs and symptoms of distress and whether additional services are required.



Enabling Learning Objectives

- A. Identify 10 signs or symptoms of post-deployment distress.
- B. Identify when to get help.
- C. Identify two sources of help.

Your Body

Signs and Symptoms (1 of 2)

- Eating changes – Too much or Too little
- Sleeping changes – Too Much or Too little
- Stomach problems – upset stomach, nausea
- Bowel problems – diarrhea or constipation
- Heart/Lung problems – heart pounding, dizzy or lightheaded, out of breath, cold sweat, dry mouth, or pale skin
- Headaches, migraines

Your Body

Signs and Symptoms (2 of 2)

- Fatigue – no energy, drained
- “Jumpiness”
- Pain in old, healed wounds
- Tension, aches and pains
- Trembling, fumbling things
- Crying spells
- Bad personal hygiene

Your Thinking

Signs and symptoms (1 of 2)

- Poor concentration
- Difficulty making decisions
- Flashbacks
- Intrusive thoughts of home, family, etc.
- Nightmares

Your Thinking

Signs and Symptoms (2 of 2)

- Loss of motivation
- Loss of trust/confidence in leaders
- Memory problems
- “1000 yard stare” or “spaced out”
- Thoughts of hurting self or others
- Disregard for rules, laws or regulations

Your Feelings

Signs and Symptoms

- Frustrated, irritable, angry
- Worried, anxious, keyed up
- Guilty, ashamed
- Depressed
- Numb (Don't feel anything)

Your Social Life

Signs and Symptoms

- Withdrawn or silent
- Difficulty communicating
- Arguing/ starting fights
- Can't be alone, need to be with/near others

When To Get Help

- Remember: These signs and symptoms are usually normal – normal reactions to abnormal situations. Over time, you will adjust and these symptoms will slowly go away.
- Seek help if the symptoms:
 - Interfere with normal duties and/or daily living and continue for more than 6-8 weeks.
 - Involves dangerous behavior ie: Thoughts of hurting self or others, reckless drinking, drug use, family violence, etc.

Other Warning Signs

- Talk of suicide or killing someone else
- Soldiers who lost their job at home (Reservists)
- Soldiers leaving the service (Retirement, ETS)
- Relationship problems
- Drug or Alcohol Problems
- Bizarre or unusual behavior
- Soldiers in trouble (Art-15, UCMJ)
- Soldiers with financial problems

Where To Get Help (1 of 2)

- In the Unit:
 - Peers
 - Supervisor
 - Chain of Command
 - Chaplain
 - Medic and/or Battalion Surgeon
- On Post:
 - Medical personnel at the clinic or hospital
 - Post Chaplains
 - Army Community Service personnel
 - Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program personnel
 - Social Work Services
 - Community Health Nurses
 - Occupational Therapists
 - Dieticians

Where To Get Help (2 of 2)

In the Community

- Medical personnel
- Veterans Administration
- Ministers and clergy
- County and state health department
- County and state social services

Summary and Conclusion

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- Introduction
- Signs and Symptoms
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